

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An article moving apparatus for moving articles, comprising:
 - a rotating shaft;
 - a supporting member provided so as to be rotatable around said rotating shaft;
 - at least one accommodating unit provided on the circumference, centered on said rotating shaft, of said supporting member for accommodating said articles so as to surround the articles; and
 - a rotation driving device for rotating said supporting member around said rotating shaft, said accommodating unit being provided on a supporting shaft inclined to said rotating shaft.
2. (ORIGINAL) The article moving apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said accommodating unit includes a plurality of accommodating units distributed on the circumference, centered on said rotating shaft, of said supporting member.
3. (ORIGINAL) The article moving apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said accommodating unit has at least one peripheral surface member provided so as to be capable of freely opening and closing with respect to said supporting shaft and forming a cylinder extending along said supporting shaft in its closed state.
4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article moving apparatus according to claim 43, wherein said accommodating unit has an opening receiving the articles on a side different from said peripheral surface member.
5. (ORIGINAL) The article moving apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising
 - an opening and closing device for opening said peripheral surface member when said accommodating unit is at a predetermined position.
6. (ORIGINAL) The article moving apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said peripheral surface member has a first engaging portion, and

said opening and closing device has a second engaging portion for opening said peripheral surface member by engaging said first engaging portion of said peripheral surface member.

7. (ORIGINAL) The article moving apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said rotating shaft is inclined at an angle of 45 degrees to the horizontal direction, and said supporting shaft is inclined at an angle of 45 degrees to said rotating shaft.

8. (ORIGINAL) The article moving apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising
a vibrating device for vibrating said accommodating unit.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A direction changing apparatus for sticks that changes the direction of alignment of the sticks, comprising:
a rotating shaft;
a supporting member provided so as to be rotatable around said rotating shaft;
at least one accommodating unit provided on the circumference, centered on said rotating shaft, of said supporting member; and
a rotation driving device for rotating said supporting member around said rotating shaft, said accommodating unit accommodating the sticks so as to surround the sticks while aligning the sticks along a supporting shaft inclined to said rotating shaft.

10. (ORIGINAL) The direction changing apparatus for sticks according to claim 9, wherein
said accommodating unit includes a plurality of accommodating units distributed on the circumference, centered on said rotating shaft, of said supporting member.

11. (ORIGINAL) The direction changing apparatus for sticks according to claim 9, wherein
said accommodating unit has at least one peripheral surface member provided so as to be capable of freely opening and closing with respect to said supporting shaft and forming a cylinder extending along said supporting shaft in its closed state.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The direction changing apparatus for sticks according to claim 9, wherein

said accommodating unit has an opening receiving the ~~articles~~sticks on a side different from said peripheral surface member.

13. (ORIGINAL) The direction changing apparatus for sticks according to claim 11, further comprising

an opening and closing device for opening said peripheral surface member when said accommodating unit is at a predetermined position.

14. (ORIGINAL) The direction changing apparatus for sticks according to claim 13, wherein

said peripheral surface member has a first engaging portion, and

said opening and closing device has a second engaging portion for opening said peripheral surface member by engaging said first engaging portion of said peripheral surface member.

15. (ORIGINAL) The direction changing apparatus for sticks according to claim 9, wherein

said rotating shaft is inclined at an angle of 45 degrees to the horizontal direction, and said supporting shaft is inclined at an angle of 45 degrees to said rotating shaft.

16. (ORIGINAL) The direction changing apparatus for sticks according to claim 9, further comprising

a vibrating device for vibrating said accommodating unit.

17. (NEW) The article moving apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the articles are elongated articles and the rotating shaft, the supporting member, the accommodating unit and the rotation driving device are arranged with respect to each other so that rotation of the supporting member around the rotating shaft by the rotation driving device causes the elongated articles accommodated by the accommodating unit to be conveyed from a first position in which the elongated articles are vertically aligned to a second position at a different location than the first position and in which the elongated articles are horizontally aligned.